

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 917

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 9683

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, KS

SUBJECT: KANG MUN-PONG CLAIMS KCIA TORTURE FORCED HIS CONFESSION

1. ON DECEMBER 8, THIRD SESSION OF KANG MUN-PONG TRIAL SAW DEFENDANT MAKE DRAMATIC CHARGE IN OPEN COURT THAT KCIA TORTURED HIM INTO MAKING CONFESSION OF POLITICAL ACTIVITIES AIMED AT REPLACING PRESIDENT PAK WITH CHUNG IL-KWON, SPEAKER OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. KANG CLAIMED KCIA HELD HIM THIRTEEN DAYS DURING WHICH TIME THEY EXTRACTED CONFESSION AND HIS WRITTEN RESIGNATION FROM ASSEMBLY. KANG SAID TO AVOID FURTHER TORTURE HE HAD GIVEN KCIA NAMES OF ASSEMBLYMEN, BUSINESSMEN AND EVEN AN INCUMBENT MINISTER OF GOVERNMENT AS CO-CONSPIRATORS.

2. JUDGE (WHO HAD ALSO PRESIDED OVER DISTRICT COURT HEARING OF MYONGDONG CASE) MADE ONE ATTEMPT TO STOP KANG'S LAWYER FROM "ASKING LEADING QUESTIONS ON MATTERS NOT RELEVANT TO CASE," BUT LAWYER PERSISTED. COURT SET NEXT SESSION OF CASE FOR DECEMBER 13.

3. AT SECOND SESSION OF TRIAL HELD NOVEMBER 3 DEFENSE LAWYER HAD ASKED KANG QUESTIONS DESIGNED TO SHOW HIS CONFESSION TO UTTERING STATEMENTS IN VIOLATION OF EM-9 WAS MADE UNDER DURESS. KANG THEN DID NOT REPLY AUDIBLY BUT NODDED ASSENT WHEN ATTORNEY REPEATED QUESTION FOR THIRD TIME.

4. COMMENT: REASONS FOR KANG'S APPARENT CHANGE OF HEART CAN NOW ONLY BE SUBJECT OF SPECULATION. HOWEVER, THEY PRESUMABLY
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RELATE TO SIN CHIK SU'S REMOVAL FROM CIA AND OTHER

EVIDENCE OF PRESSURES ON GOVERNMENT. KANG AND SOME OF HIS
ASSOCIATES HAVE BEEN UNDER VARYING DEGREES OF PRESSURE FROM
GOVERNMENT IN RECENT MONTHS, AND MAY NOW HOPE THAT GOVERNMENT
WILL BE MORE AMENABLE TO SETTLEMENT WITH THEM.
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